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SAMR NEWSLETTER



Nancy Evans, editor

SAMR at the SBL

San Antonio, TX, Nov. 19-22, 2016

SAMR will co-sponsor three sessions at this year's annual SBL meeting in San Antonio. We continue our collaborations with the SBL Greco-Roman Religions Section, and in addition SAMR will be collaborating with two new program units, the North American Association for the Study of Religion, and IQSA's *Qur'an and Late Antiquity* Group. Here is a first glimpse of what we are looking forward to later in November:

After Nongbri: Was there Greek and Roman Religion in the Ancient World? (S 19-130: 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM, 11/19/2016) is organized around Nongbri's *Before Religion* (Yale University Press, 2013), and will feature papers by Frederick Brenk (Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome), Nickolas Roubeka (North-West University), Vaia Touna (University of Alabama), Craig Martin and Savannah Finver (St. Thomas Aquinas College), followed by a response from Brent Nongbri (Macquarie University).

Our second session, *Imagine No Religion. What You Can See if You Stop Looking For What Isn't There* (S 19-219: 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM 11/19/2016) is devoted to the forthcoming book by Carlin Barton and Daniel Boyarin called *Imagine No Religion: How Modern Abstractions Hide Ancient Realities* (Fordham University Press). In addition to the authors Barton and Boyarin, panelists will include Mark Roblee (University of Massachusetts Amherst), Heike Omerzu (Københavns Universitet), and Gerhard van den Heever (University of South Africa).

Finally, we are very excited about our third session (S 21-348: 4:00 to 6:30 PM, 11/21/2016), SAMR's panel with a pedagogical theme co-sponsored by the IQSA (International Qur'anic Studies Association). *Teaching Ancient Mediterranean Religions from Rome to Islam* will include talks by Richard S. Ascough & Erin K. Vearncombe (Queen's University & Princeton University), Andrew Durdin (University of Chicago), Paul Robertson (Colby-Sawyer College), Greg Fisher (Carleton University), Elizabeth DePalma Digeser (University of California-Santa Barbara), and Michael Pregill (Boston University).

(continued on page 5)

In this Issue

- SAMR at the 2016 SBL
- President's Column
- CALL for PAPERS
- Final Program for *Religious Convergence in the Ancient Mediterranean*
- Announcements
- News from Members
- Palermo photos

President's Column

Greetings to all SAMR Members!

Welcome to the Fall, and a great year of programming, pedagogy, and conversations ahead! We are excited to see the new trends in our upcoming sessions, which add an emphasis on co-sponsored events and a focus on pedagogy to our traditions of scholarly and multi-disciplinary conversations. San Antonio will be a busy meeting, with three sessions as well as a SAMR business meeting. Please plan on reserving a space in your schedules for the meeting at 3:15 on November 19 in 214 C in the Convention Center (second level, west). Two of our panels will dive into recent and forthcoming books which address fundamental questions of definition and critical perspectives on religion: 'After Nongbri' takes up the parameters of religion brought to the fore in Nongbri's *Before Religion* (Yale 2013); 'Imagine no Religion' anticipates the release of a new volume by Barton and Boyarin, *Imagine No Religion: How Modern Abstractions Hide Ancient Realities* (Oxford 2016). The book challenges us to set aside our contemporary categories when approaching religion in the Greek and Roman world. These papers are available in advance: please contact the chair of the session, Gerhard van den Heever (vdheega@unisa.ac.za) or the presenters, as listed in the SBL program.

(continued on page 4)

CALL for PAPERS

Numa, Numa: The Life and Afterlife of the Second King of Rome

Ann Arbor, MI

13-14 October, 2017

Organizers: Celia E. Schultz (University of Michigan) and Mark R. Silk (Trinity College)

This conference aims to help correct modern scholarship's oversight of the second king of Rome, Numa Pompilius – the foundational figure of Roman religion who also enjoyed a remarkably long, varied, and rich *nachleben* in Western thought, literature, and art. From the first century BCE into the nineteenth century, Numa personified the good monarch and emblemized how religion should (or, in the case of early Latin Christian intellectuals, should not) function in society. His paramour, the divine nymph Egeria, became the ideal for a male leader's female helpmeet and advisor. Numa appears in genres as disparate as Italian Renaissance and early modern French works on political theory; at least two seventeenth-century operas; paintings by Poussin and Lorain; poems by Milton, Byron, and Tennyson; letters of John Adams; a late eighteenth-century novel by the French writer J.P.C. de Florian, and the important nineteenth-century Icelandic poem, *Numa Rimur*. We hope to attract papers representing the fields of Classics, Comparative Literature, Political Science, Religion, Art History, and Music.

The conference will held at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor on 13-14 October, 2017.

Among the subjects the conference will address are:

1. The light Numa's biography sheds on early Italic religion.
2. Numa as a model of the good Roman emperor.
3. Numa the bête noir of the Latin church fathers.
4. How medieval and Renaissance humanists rehabilitated Numa as the father of civil religion.
5. The use of Numa to criticize Christianity in the republican tradition.
6. Numa as an exemplar for the papacy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and for Enlightenment monarchy.
7. The liaison of Numa and Egeria in art, poetry, and fiction.

We invite abstracts (500 words) for papers that will last 25 minutes. Abstracts should to be sent as email attachments to the conference account (numanumaconference@umich.edu) by 15 February, 2017. Notifications will be sent out no later than 15 March, 2017.

Confirmed speakers are Christopher Smith (British School at Rome), John J. Martin (History, Duke University), F. Jackson Bryce (Classics, Carleton College), Arelene Saxonhouse (Political Science, University of Michigan), Sara Ahbel-Rappe (Classical Studies, University of Michigan), Parrish Wright (Interdepartmental Program in Greek and Roman History, University of Michigan), Celia Schultz (Classical Studies, University of Michigan), Mark Silk (Religion, Trinity College), Jean-Marc Kehres (Language and Culture Studies, Trinity College).

Final Program
Religious Convergence in the Ancient Mediterranean

June 23–26, 2016
Villa Whitaker, Palermo, Sicily

Thursday, June 23

Introduction: Sandra Blakely, President, Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions

SESSION 1: LANDSCAPE. Chair: Barbara Kowalzig; papers by Amelia Brown, Irene Polinskaya, Sandra Blakely

SESSION 2: WESTERN SICILY. Chair: David Scahill; papers by Rosella Giglio, Birgit Öhlinger, Meritxell Ferrer Martin

SESSION 3: PHOENICIANS 1. Chair: Sarah Morris; papers by Adriano Orsingher and José Miguel Puebla Morón

SESSION 4: ROME 1. Chair: Jeffrey Brodd; papers by Kevin Dicus, Eric Orlin and James Rives

Friday, June 24

SESSION 5: ANATOLIA 1. Chair: Jared Miller; papers by Amir Gilan, Susanne Görke, Billie Jean Collins and Elisabeth Rieken

SESSION 6: MAGIC. Chair: Radcliffe Edmonds III; papers by Christopher Faraone, Lech Trzcionkowski, and Sarah G. Titus

SESSION 7: ROME 2. Chair: Kevin Dicus; papers by Megan Nutzman, Claudia Moser, and Marco Romeo Pitone

SESSION 8: SICILY 1. Chair: Sebastiano Tusa; papers by Francesca Oliveri, Margaret Miles, and Giuseppina Mammina and M. Pamela Toti

Saturday, June 25

SESSION 9: GREEKS OUTSIDE OF GREECE. Chair: Chris Faraone; papers by Aaron Beck-Schachter, Daniel Berman and Louis A. Ruprecht Jr.

SESSION 10: CHRISTIANITY. Chair: Louis A. Ruprecht Jr.; papers by Daniel Price, Lindsay G. Driediger-Murphy, and Adele Reinhartz

SESSION 11: ANATOLIA 2. Chair: Elisabeth Rieken; papers by Annick Payne, Carlo Corti, Jared Miller, Mary R. Bachvarova and Ian Rutherford

SESSION 12: SYRIA-PALESTINE. Chair: Billie Jean Collins; papers by Tallay Ornan, Virginia Herrmann and Erin Darby

Sunday, June 26

SESSION 13: SICILY 2 / PHOENICIANS 2. Chair: Sandra Blakely; papers by Sebastiano Tusa, Sarah Morris, Lorenzo Nigro and Federica Spagnoli

FIELD TRIP TO MOZIA

The complete final program can be found on SAMR's [Blog](#)

President's Message (continued from page 1)

Our pedagogical session represents a new frontier in both the focus on the classroom and the critical bridge between Rome and Islam: here colleagues will present papers focusing on classroom strategies, comparison and categorization, and the establishment of historical frameworks for integrating the teaching of Islam and Roman religions. We look forward to lively conversations and new horizons, and hope to see many SAMR members there.

A little chillier, but no less exciting, are the panels coming up at the AIA/SCS meetings in Toronto. Thanks to the great energies of the program committee, SAMR has sponsored a panel with the Society for Classical Studies on Roman Religion and Augustan Poetry, to be held at 10:45-12:45 on Saturday January 7; we look forward to papers from Zsuzsa Varhelyi, Barbara Weinlich, Julia Hejduk, and Morgan Palmer, with Nancy Evans presiding. This is SAMR's first panel devoted specifically to the intersection of religion and Classical philology. Papers will negotiate the boundaries between literary and ritual approaches in the works of Horace, Propertius, and Ovid. Additional sessions of particular interest for SAMR members are the panel organized by the Committee on Ancient History on Change in Ancient Mediterranean Religions, to be held Friday, January 6 from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.: Andrew Gallia will preside, with papers by Fred Naiden, Nathanael Andrade, Susan Satterfield, Douglas Boin and Sandy Blakely. And a joint AIA-SCS session, *God the Anthropologist: Text, Material and Theory in the Study of Ancient Religion* will bring together papers from Barbara Kowalzig, Andreas Bendlin, Dan-El Padilla Peralta, Milette Gaifman and Matthew McCarthy, at 1:45 – 4:45 on Friday, January 6, with Megan Daniels and Sandy Blakely presiding. Details on the SAMR business meeting time and place for Toronto are forthcoming: watch the SAMR blog for details!

Finally, we would like to extend great thanks to all the SAMR members, affiliates and friends who gathered in Palermo in June for the conference, *Religious Convergence in the Ancient Mediterranean*. We met in the spectacular hall of the Villa Malfitano, surrounded by super-sized tapestries of Vergil's Aeneid, for 40 thoughtful, far-reaching papers exploring the question of convergence in religion in the ancient Mediterranean, from Hittite Anatolia to Syro-Palestine, Sicily, Rome and Greece. The conference was made possible by the generous

Announcements

From **Eric Orlin**: After working for many years on this project, I'm delighted to finally announce the publication of *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Ancient Mediterranean Religion*, the first comprehensive single-volume reference work offering coverage of ancient religions in the Mediterranean world, from pre-historical antiquity in the third millennium B.C.E. through the rise of Islam in the seventh century C.E, from Babylonia to Spain and North Africa. Despite the fact that so much information is available for free on the internet these days, I hope that the excellence of the scholars from all disciplines who contributed to this volume can make the case that there is still a place for reference works in the publishing world and not just for Handbooks and Companions. I especially want to thank the editors who worked with me on the project: Liz Fried, Jennifer Wright Knust, Michael Pregill, and Michael Satlow.

President's Message (continued from column 1)

support of Sebastiano Tusa, Sovrintendente del Mare della Regione Siciliana and Professor of Prehistoric and Protohistoric archaeology at the Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa of Napoli, and Paola Misuraca, the Soprintendente ai beni culturali di Trapani, on behalf of the Fondazione Whitaker. Special thanks are due to Billie Jean Collins, whose unflagging organizational energies ensured the smooth running of all sessions. The conference concluded with a spectacular trip to the ancient site at Mozia and its museum. Our discussions were as lively as the setting was memorable: warm thanks to all SAMR members who made the long trek! Your energy, conversations and scholarly contributions made the event a tremendous success, and a great memory.

As always, all the work of SAMR would be impossible without the many hours devoted to the organization by Nancy Evans and the program committee, Paul Dilley, James Rives, and Amelia Brown. Warm thanks to all for their generosity, energy and vision – we look forward to seeing you at the meetings!

Sandy Blakely, President
Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions

SAMR at the SBL (continued from page 1)

We hope to see many of you at these sessions, and at the business meeting that will follow the afternoon session on November 19. If you have an idea for a panel or a topic for the coming year, the business meeting is the place to be. As always, we are grateful to Gerhard van den Heever and the SBL Greco-Roman Religions Section for allowing us to present panels under their aegis. Members are encouraged to attend the other panels of interest sponsored by this section: *Interpreting Religion in the Mediterranean World* (S 20-212: 1:00 to 3:30 PM, 11/20/2016), and *Redescribing Cult Formation in the Early Imperial Era. Discourse, Invention, Material Religion* (S 21-127: 9:00 to 11:30 AM, 11/21/2016).

News from Members

Fred Brenk reports that he gave a talk entitled "The Iseum Campense and Animal Worship: Becoming Egyptian to be Roman (Up to a Point)" for the meeting in Rome, Temple – Monument – lieu de mémoire. The Iseum Campense from the Roman Empire to the Modern Age: Historical, Archaeological and Historiographical Perspectives. An International Conference Held in Rome at the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome (KNIR), the Danish Academy and the Egyptian Academy, 25th to 27th of May. It was organized by Miguel John Versluys (Leiden University), Kristine Bülow Clausen (Aarhus University), and Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi (Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche).

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Check us out on Facebook as well!



SAMR's [Blog](#) has more photos of the Palermo conference, *Religious Convergence in the Ancient Mediterranean*.